

A N
E S S A Y
Towards An
UNIVERSAL ALPHABET.

By Mr. *Francis Lodwick* R. S. S.

HAVING observed a great difficulty in truly writing what is pronounced, or truly pronouncing what is written, either in our own or foreign Languages, by the Ordinary Alphabets now in use, arising either from the want of some Letters, or the differing Pronunciation of the same Character or Letter in differing Languages and the irregularities of its various Sounds in any one Language; I saw a necessity of some such expedient as I have here attempted, *Viz. An Universal Alphabet*, which should contain an Enumeration of all such single Sounds or Letters as are used in any Language, which I have endeavoured by Examining all those Languages, which hitherto I have considered: Altho' this my attempt be not new, but what before by others hath been attempted, yet I hope what herein I have done will not be useless.

The Benefits of such a Collection being perfect.

1. Children from their first beginning, being taught and accustomed to the true Expression of all these single Sounds or Letters, will without difficulty be brought to pronounce truly and readily any Language how seemingly difficult. fo-
ever

ever; for the pretended difficulty to some Persons of Pronouncing some Letters, is only that they have not been accustomed to pronounce them, either single or in conjunction with others: and this difficulty is chiefly in Persons come to Age.

2. It will enable any one, accustomed to the true Pronunciation of this Alphabet, truly to describe the Pronunciation of any Language whatever, that shall in his hearing be distinctly pronounced; so as another also accustomed to this Alphabet, altho' he before never had heard this Language pronounced, shall notwithstanding at first sight of such Writing, be able so truly to pronounce it, that it shall (if at all) very little differ from the Original Pronunciation. Whereas by the use of the common Alphabets, if any strange Language be written, another that's a stranger to that Language, shall never be able truly to pronounce such a Writing, as it should be, or was by the writer intended, nor even the Writer himself sometime after that he hath forgotten what Sound he designed to describe:

3. It will also be useful to perpetuate the true Sounds of any Language, and serve as a standard thereof to after-Ages: For if all the single Sounds expressible, be here Characterized. *And that no one Character have more than one Sound, nor any one Sound be expressed by more than one Character*; it cannot fall out that any Character should be falsely pronounced, but it will soon be discovered; for this false Sound he giveth it, must be the true Sound of some other Letter of this Alphabet: and so none can Erre herein, but he that wilfully or carelessly will do it.

In this Collection I proceed according to these Rules.

1. **T**Hat no true single Sound can be truly described or expressed by the Conjunction of any two or more other single Sounds, *Viz.* If a Vowel, by the Conjunction

of other single Vowels, or if a Consonant, by the Conjunction of other single Consonants.

2. That whatever Sound cannot be expressed or described, but by the Conjunction of two or more single Sounds, is no single but a compounded Sound.

3. That in every composition of single Sounds, the particular single Sounds which make up that Composition, ought to be truly and clearly discerned in the Sound of the Composition, otherwise it cannot be truly said to be a Composition, and composed of such single Sounds.

The Single Sounds

Usually named Letters, are commonly distinguished into *Vowels* and *Consonants*. *Vowels* are such as are singly expressible, as, a, e, o, &c. *Consonants* are such as cannot singly be expressed without the Conjunction of a *Vowel*, as, b, d, f, g, &c.

Of Vowels.

The whole number of them are these 14 following, to which, for the better discerning of their Sounds, I have annexed so many words wherein they are expressed, all *English* but three, *Viz.* the 7, 12, because no *English* words occurred to my *Memory*, wherein they are expressed.

1	a as tall	8	ui---muis <i>Lowdutch</i>
2	a---tallow	9	y---tile
3	a---tale	10	o---tone
4	e---tell	11	u---tunne
5	ea--teal	12	u--une <i>French</i>
6	i---till	13	oo--tool
7	u---dure <i>French</i>	14	ou--tould

These

These are the *Vowels*, each of which are long and short.

Short as in the words, God, Man, Sin.

Long as in Ball, Demand, Seen, &c.

Of Diphthongs.

A *Diphthong* in the ordinary use of the Word signifieth a Compound of two Vowels, but those in ordinary so named, are most of them nothing but only single Vowels, as *ea*, *oo*, *ou*, *eo*, *ai*, in the Words *teal*, *tool*, *tould*, *people*, *main*, &c. That these are but single Sounds will appear. if we consider the Sounds of the Vowels singly, that make those supposed Compositions, and then whether those Sounds in Composition will make out the true Sound required ; so as both of them may be clearly discerned in these pretended Compounds. For instance ; in *ea* in *Teal*.

Consider the Sound of *e* in the word *sent*, or in the Word *scene* ; and *a* in the Word *ball*, or in the Word *and*, or in the Word *tale*, and then whether *e*, in either of the two Sounds going before, and *a* in either of the three Sounds following joined together, will make out the true Sound of *ea* in the Word *teal*, if not, then it is a single Sound ; thus, if you proceed to examine all the other, you will I doubt not find the same event, and I believe the true *Diphthongs* and *Triphthong* of the *Greeks* were no other but a true expression of the single Vowels they joined together, but in so short a time, as both or all three were express'd in the time that ordinarily one single *Vowel* was express'd.

Of Consonants.

THe whole number of *Consonants* are these undermentioned, as nigh as I could Collect, by examining all the Languages I am acquainted with, or have heard express'd, and I think but few, if any, single Consonants have escaped my Notice, all which in this following Table have ranged in 11 Files, and 6 Ranks.

1	2	3	4	5
1 B bond	D dark	J Jeft	G Game	=
2 P Pond	T tart	Ch. Chest.	K came	=
3 M mind	N name	gn <i>Seignior</i>	Fr. ng song	=
4 =	dh this	J <i>Jean</i>	g gaen	<i>l.d.</i> V Valley
5 =	th thing	fh fhall	ch dach	F Folly
6	n <i>danse</i> Fr			

6	7	8	9	10	11
=	L Lane	H hand	Y yarn	R rand	W wand
=					<i>Fr. sign. Fren.</i>
=					<i>Ld. Lowdutch</i>
Z Zeal	lh <i>W</i>				<i>W. Welch</i>
S Seal					

The First File containeth three *Consonants*, the Second six, the Third and Fourth ten, the Fifth and Sixth four, the seventh two, the remaining four each one, in all twenty nine *Consonants*.

The second Rank in each File contains Derivatives [so I shall name them] in relation to the First Rank, or their Primitives, all alik in kind, so also all the Derivatives in the Third Fourth and Fifth Ranks, whereby their Sounds will be the better comprehended.

Those

Those places filled by two strokes (=) signifie that Sounds may be exprefs'd by the same posture of the Mouth with their Primitives, answering in kind to those in the same Rank wherein they stand, but they would be so like in pronunciation to some others in the Table, that the difference would be too nice for common discernment, and also for that I have not observed them used in any Language I have heard exprefs'd by a perfect Mouth, I thought it needless to characterize them.

As those of the Fourth and Fifth Rank in the First File are like those of the Fourth and Fifth Rank in the Fifth File, and those of the First Second and Third Ranks in the Fifth File, are like those of the same Ranks in the First File, so those of the First, Second, Third Ranks in the Sixth File, are like those of the same Ranks in the Second File.

Some of these above-mentioned twenty-nine *single Consonants*, are vulgarly supposed compounded, as *th, ch, sh, gn, ng, &c.* But if you consider the Sound of each *single Consonant* in the Composition apart, and then the Conjunction of them in that order, so as the *single Sounds* may be clearly discerned in the Composition, you will never make the Sounds required, and if neither by this nor by any other Conjunction the required *sound* can be made out, it must be a single and no compound Sound.

Whereas these single sounds, vulgarly described as Compounds, ought to have single Characters; and Secondly, that some of the single Characters have in the same Language a different Sound, as *c* in the Words, *can, mice*; *g*, in the Words *George, Game, &c.* and also a different Sound in different Languages, as *I* Consonant differently exprefs'd in several Languages, as in *English, Low Dutch, French Spanish*: and Thirdly, that some *single sounds* are differently characterized in the same Language, as the Sound of *j* in *same* and *c* in *mice*; (the same Sound by two different Characters;) so also *c* in *can*, and *k* in *kind* the same, &c. and the same also in different Languages, as *ch* in the *French Word chose* and *sh* in the Word *shall*, the same, &c. It will be impossible

fible in the use of the present Characters or Alphabets, to add those wanting, and to correct and limit the Sound of others in use; thereby to constitute a perfect Alphabet, because people so long accustomed, or habituated to such corrupt and differing Expressions of the present Characters, will be always subject on the sight of the old, to give them those Sounds they have been used to, and to spell words according to their old and corrupt Custom, whatsoever Rules shall be set to the contrary; and therefore there will be a necessity of a whole new Set of Characters, both of *Vowels*, and *Consonants*.

Hitherto I have endeavoured to make a Collection of all the single Vowels and Consonants, which are used in any Language; in which, if I have not collected all those that are, yet in the method I have used therein, I hope I have attained nigher to it, than any other Collection extant. I have likewise shown the necessity of a new Set of Literal Characters, & such a one is this I here propose; First the Set of Consonantal Characters, are to be seen in the top of Page (137) being ranged in the same method and order with those in the foregoing Table. The first Rank in every file are those I name Radical Characters, the other succeeding Ranks have each a distinct Characteristical Addition to distinguish them from one another, which causeth some complication; but yet I judged it necessary to express the same in the Character, the more regularly to sort them into Classes, and to express the derivation of Letters of the same Organe, the one from the other.

The Set of Vocal Characters is likewise in the same Page with the Consonants; in writing they are to be placed over the Consonants, which they follow in Expression; and whereas some Syllables begin with a Vowel, place the 12th Consonantal Character, answering to the *Hebrew*, *Aleph*; and over the same place the Vowel beginning such a Syllable.

This Character may seem somewhat too complicate for dispatch in ordinary Writing, but for Printing it will be the

the same with that now used, and I only designed it for that purpose, but for the Pen, others more convenient may be invented.

To distinguish the long Vowel from the short, add a prick to the vocal Character.

The 9. 11. 12. 13. 14th vocal Characters, are (for want of single strokes) compounded of the first and second.

The Diphthongues truly such (as I have before noted in the first Part) may be made by the Conjunction of the Single Vocal Characters in the order as they follow, and will be easily distinguished from the 5 foregoing compounded Characters of the single Vowels, because there will not lightly occur any Diphthongs compounded of the first two Vowels.

The Accent may be a thwart line under the Syllable that is to be accented.

The 4 Marks of pauses ordinarily used, namely , ; : . may be continued.

The Characters signifying the various Modes of Expression may be these following, and ought to be placed at the beginning and end of every Sentence requiring it.

[]	<i>Explication.</i>	}	{ ?	<i>Interrogation.</i>
()	<i>Parentthesis.</i>		{ !	<i>Wonder.</i>
! !	<i>Emphasis.</i>		{ ;	<i>Irony.</i>

A Second Essay concerning the UNIVERSAL
PRIMER.

AS the present Alphabets are imperfect, (as in the foregoing Essay is declared,) so are also the Primers or first Books, wherein Children and others are taught to Spell and Read, first in not having a perfect Alphabet. Secondly in not being digested in such a Method as is fit and proper to teach them, as they ought to be taught, for the usual way of teaching to spell, is to dismember every syllable (of more than one Letter) into many Syllables, by expressing every Letter apart, and Syllabically, and the Consonants with such a Vowel as they are ordinarily named with, and then requiring them to join all these Syllables into one word, but how preposterous this method is, one instance for all will manifest, suppose the monosyllable *Brand* be to be spelled, they will teach them thus to dismember it *Bee, er, a, en, dee*, and then require them to joyn these into one Syllable, which it is impossible to do, and they must be necessitated as they have begun, to express this one Syllable by five Syllables, which was not designed, whereas they should teach them to express every Syllable entire at first sight, without dismembering it. And to do this, they must proceed gradually, first beginning with the most simple Syllables, and so by degrees proceeding to the more difficult and Compounded, till they can readily pronounce a whole Syllable at first sight, even the most difficult that are.

To that end, let all the Primers be thus contrived; at the top of the leaf, let all the Vowels be placed singly in order as they follow in one Rank, and under the same place, Syllables, first, of one Vowel and one Consonant, following it throughout all the Variations; then of one Consonant and one Vowel following, *2dly*, of two Consonants before, and one Vowel following throughout the Variations. *3dly*, of one Vowel and three or four Consonants

sonants following. And of three Consonants going before, and one Vowel following. *4thly* of one, two or three Consonants going before a Vowel, and one two, three, or four Consonants following. *5thly*, of some Syllables with Diphthongs or Triphthongs. For Instance,

a. e. i. o. u. &c.
ab. eb. ib. ob. ub. &c.
ad. ed. id. od. ud. &c.
ba. be. bi. bo. bu. &c.
ald. eld. ild. old. uld. &c.
dra. dre. dri. dro. dru. &c.
balm. belm. bilm. bolm. bulm. &c.

After this place, a number of words of two, three, or four Syllables, from the more easie to the most difficult expressions, without heed to their Significations.

Further let there follow some words of several Syllables, with the Accent variously placed, as on the first, second, third, &c.

Let there be two or three small Discourses writ with this Alphabet, in so many several Languages, with the Accent rightly placed, and truly distinguished by their pauses. And thus you have a perfect Primer for the Design.

Of teaching with this Primer.

First, begin to teach them the true sound of all the Vowels singly, then proceed to the following single Syllables, beginning with the easiest of Expression, and so proceed on gradually to the most difficult, and then to the words of more Syllables, and lastly, to the use of the Accent and Pauses; when the learner hath past all these, you may exercise him in the reading of the following Discourses, and therein let

him exactly observe the Accent and the Pauses, and hitherto it will not be Material, whether the Syllables be significant or not, or whether they understand the small discourses or no, for hitherto we suppose them by this instruction, only capable of Reading or uttering exactly whatsoever is written in this Alphabet and Character, in what Language soever, which is the design of this Primer.

And to gain a greater readiness and habit herein, teach them to write truly what they hear distinctly expressed, according to this Alphabet, proceeding therein gradually as before, and rightly to place the Accent and Pauses, and also the use of the Signes of the different modes of speaking.

In Teaching, Observe these necessary Rules.

1. Proceed leisurely and orderly. Suffer them not to pass by any mispronunciation uncorrected, from the beginning to the end, cause them so oft to repeat a wrong pronunciation, till with your assistance they pronounce it truly, allowing for the natural defects in the Speech of some persons, the younger will learn these pronunciations more easily, but the elder may attain them also, although with more difficulty.

2. Suffer them at no hand in spelling, to dismember any Syllable by repeating the Letters singly, but that they pronounce them whole as they find them.

Think not this method tedious, the end will crown and reward the labour, and what the learner hath thus attained and habituated himself to, will remain with him all his life time.

This new Primer will without change except in the Title, be the same for all Nations and Languages.

The following Page gives the Alphabet and Character mentioned in this Discourse, with the Lords Prayer in English, written therein as a Specimen.

137

<i>The Table of Vowels</i>									
1	/	a							
2	/	a							
3	-	a							
4	e	e							
5	e	ea							
6	i	i							
7	u	u							
8	u	ū							
9	y	y							
10	o	o							
11	v	u							
12	e	eu							
13	oo	oo							
14	>	ou							

The Lords Prayer in English

19 26 34 41 51 61 71 81 91 101 111 121 131 141 151 161 171 181 191 201 211 221 231 241 251 261 271 281 291 301 311 321 331 341 351 361 371 381 391 401 411 421 431 441 451 461 471 481 491 501 511 521 531 541 551 561 571 581 591 601 611 621 631 641 651 661 671 681 691 701 711 721 731 741 751 761 771 781 791 801 811 821 831 841 851 861 871 881 891 901 911 921 931 941 951 961 971 981 991 1001 1011 1021 1031 1041 1051 1061 1071 1081 1091 1101 1111 1121 1131 1141 1151 1161 1171 1181 1191 1201 1211 1221 1231 1241 1251 1261 1271 1281 1291 1301 1311 1321 1331 1341 1351 1361 1371 1381 1391 1401 1411 1421 1431 1441 1451 1461 1471 1481 1491 1501 1511 1521 1531 1541 1551 1561 1571 1581 1591 1601 1611 1621 1631 1641 1651 1661 1671 1681 1691 1701 1711 1721 1731 1741 1751 1761 1771 1781 1791 1801 1811 1821 1831 1841 1851 1861 1871 1881 1891 1901 1911 1921 1931 1941 1951 1961 1971 1981 1991 2001 2011 2021 2031 2041 2051 2061 2071 2081 2091 2101 2111 2121 2131 2141 2151 2161 2171 2181 2191 2201 2211 2221 2231 2241 2251 2261 2271 2281 2291 2301 2311 2321 2331 2341 2351 2361 2371 2381 2391 2401 2411 2421 2431 2441 2451 2461 2471 2481 2491 2501 2511 2521 2531 2541 2551 2561 2571 2581 2591 2601 2611 2621 2631 2641 2651 2661 2671 2681 2691 2701 2711 2721 2731 2741 2751 2761 2771 2781 2791 2801 2811 2821 2831 2841 2851 2861 2871 2881 2891 2901 2911 2921 2931 2941 2951 2961 2971 2981 2991 3001 3011 3021 3031 3041 3051 3061 3071 3081 3091 3101 3111 3121 3131 3141 3151 3161 3171 3181 3191 3201 3211 3221 3231 3241 3251 3261 3271 3281 3291 3301 3311 3321 3331 3341 3351 3361 3371 3381 3391 3401 3411 3421 3431 3441 3451 3461 3471 3481 3491 3501 3511 3521 3531 3541 3551 3561 3571 3581 3591 3601 3611 3621 3631 3641 3651 3661 3671 3681 3691 3701 3711 3721 3731 3741 3751 3761 3771 3781 3791 3801 3811 3821 3831 3841 3851 3861 3871 3881 3891 3901 3911 3921 3931 3941 3951 3961 3971 3981 3991 4001 4011 4021 4031 4041 4051 4061 4071 4081 4091 4101 4111 4121 4131 4141 4151 4161 4171 4181 4191 4201 4211 4221 4231 4241 4251 4261 4271 4281 4291 4301 4311 4321 4331 4341 4351 4361 4371 4381 4391 4401 4411 4421 4431 4441 4451 4461 4471 4481 4491 4501 4511 4521 4531 4541 4551 4561 4571 4581 4591 4601 4611 4621 4631 4641 4651 4661 4671 4681 4691 4701 4711 4721 4731 4741 4751 4761 4771 4781 4791 4801 4811 4821 4831 4841 4851 4861 4871 4881 4891 4901 4911 4921 4931 4941 4951 4961 4971 4981 4991 5001 5011 5021 5031 5041 5051 5061 5071 5081 5091 5101 5111 5121 5131 5141 5151 5161 5171 5181 5191 5201 5211 5221 5231 5241 5251 5261 5271 5281 5291 5301 5311 5321 5331 5341 5351 5361 5371 5381 5391 5401 5411 5421 5431 5441 5451 5461 5471 5481 5491 5501 5511 5521 5531 5541 5551 5561 5571 5581 5591 5601 5611 5621 5631 5641 5651 5661 5671 5681 5691 5701 5711 5721 5731 5741 5751 5761 5771 5781 5791 5801 5811 5821 5831 5841 5851 5861 5871 5881 5891 5901 5911 5921 5931 5941 5951 5961 5971 5981 5991 6001 6011 6021 6031 6041 6051 6061 6071 6081 6091 6101 6111 6121 6131 6141 6151 6161 6171 6181 6191 6201 6211 6221 6231 6241 6251 6261 6271 6281 6291 6301 6311 6321 6331 6341 6351 6361 6371 6381 6391 6401 6411 6421 6431 6441 6451 6461 6471 6481 6491 6501 6511 6521 6531 6541 6551 6561 6571 6581 6591 6601 6611 6621 6631 6641 6651 6661 6671 6681 6691 6701 6711 6721 6731 6741 6751 6761 6771 6781 6791 6801 6811 6821 6831 6841 6851 6861 6871 6881 6891 6901 6911 6921 6931 6941 6951 6961 6971 6981 6991 7001 7011 7021 7031 7041 7051 7061 7071 7081 7091 7101 7111 7121 7131 7141 7151 7161 7171 7181 7191 7201 7211 7221 7231 7241 7251 7261 7271 7281 7291 7301 7311 7321 7331 7341 7351 7361 7371 7381 7391 7401 7411 7421 7431 7441 7451 7461 7471 7481 7491 7501 7511 7521 7531 7541 7551 7561 7571 7581 7591 7601 7611 7621 7631 7641 7651 7661 7671 7681 7691 7701 7711 7721 7731 7741 7751 7761 7771 7781 7791 7801 7811 7821 7831 7841 7851 7861 7871 7881 7891 7901 7911 7921 7931 7941 7951 7961 7971 7981 7991 8001 8011 8021 8031 8041 8051 8061 8071 8081 8091 8101 8111 8121 8131 8141 8151 8161 8171 8181 8191 8201 8211 8221 8231 8241 8251 8261 8271 8281 8291 8301 8311 8321 8331 8341 8351 8361 8371 8381 8391 8401